



United States  
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Forest  
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# News Release

For Immediate Release:

**Date:** April 1, 2004

## *Lake Vesuvius to Receive Trout for Wheelin' Sportsmen Fishing Day*

PEDRO, OHIO - Lake Vesuvius will be stocked with 1000 rainbow trout for a one-day fishing event for the disabled on April 9. The Wayne National Forest will be host to the event, the first fishing event since refilling Lake Vesuvius earlier this year. This special fishing event, planned so that those restricted by age or disabilities can fish by accessing the lake using the newly built boardwalk, is sponsored by the South Hills Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation.

The Board of Lawrence County Commissioners have proclaimed April 9 as "Wheelin' Sportsmen Fishing Day." In their proclamation they point out that there are more than 5300 physically challenged outdoors persons residing in Ohio who would like to participate in the outdoor activities of hunting and fishing, and that many of them live in the Lawrence County area.

The Wheelin' Sportsman is an outreach program established by the 500,000-strong National Wild Turkey Federation intended to provide physically challenged individuals opportunities to participate in outdoor activities such as fishing, hunting, bird watching and others. The South Hills Longbeard Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation is scheduled to provide volunteers who will assist the disabled anglers and provide them with lunch. The Ohio University Southern Nature Center will furnish drinks for the participants.

This one-time only stocking of rainbow trout into Vesuvius will be handled by the Ohio Division of Wildlife. The trout will be in the 10 to 13 inch category and are scheduled for release into the lake at 11 a.m. the day of the event.

According to Robert Burcham, Vice President of the South Hills Chapter, "There are a lot of people who would like to fish, but haven't been able to do so for many years because age or disabilities have kept them from getting out and enjoying the lake. But," Burcham went on to add, "all of that has changed now since the boardwalk has been built."

The Forest Service constructed a quarter mile long boardwalk that is suspended over the water between the boat dock and the dam. According to Ironton District Ranger, Gloria Chrismer, "It was built with a gentle grade, has safety railings and has benches for resting. The boardwalk makes it possible for persons young and old, even if they are physically challenged, to fish at Lake Vesuvius."



The gate to the boat ramp area will be unlocked at 10 a.m. for mobility impaired arrivals and parking at the dock is reserved for them so that wheelchairs and scooters may be loaded and unloaded. No private boats will be allowed in the area during the event.

Free Ohio fishing licenses are available for Ohio residents with certain levels of disability. Applications for these licenses are available at the Ironton District Ranger Office on State Rt. 93 in Pedro, Ohio. Participants must follow all Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) rules and regulations for fishing. For more fishing or licensing information call ODNR Division of Wildlife Information Line at 1-800-WILDLIFE (1-800-945-3543).

Those persons interested in participating should contact Eddie Park at the WNF Ironton Ranger District at (740) 534-6534 to receive more information.

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